

Screening, Evaluations and Assessments

January 2005

How does WorkFirst determine whether parents are ready to work?

WorkFirst partners screen, evaluate and assess parents in the program to determine their employability and help them move to independence as soon as possible. These assessments:

- Ensure parents are ready to search for work
- Identify employment skills and interests to aid in conducting a targeted job search
- Determine the services that allow parents to function effectively in the workplace
- Identify significant barriers to employment, such as substance abuse, family violence, or mental illness that need to be addressed

What assessments are given by each WorkFirst agency?

The **Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)** program specialists screen parents who are new to the WorkFirst program to determine any employment barriers such as medical problems, substance abuse or family violence that need to be addressed before a person can successfully find and keep a job. They also identify issues such as lack of transportation or child care that may be readily solved. This process results in an Individual Responsibility Plan that outlines steps parents will take to achieve self-sufficiency and meet WorkFirst participation requirements.

Employment Security Department (ESD) staff conduct a comprehensive work skills assessment that helps WorkFirst parents entering the Targeted Job Search program identify their skills, interests and work values. It serves as a building block for creating a personalized success plan that lays out each step a parent must take to successfully enter the local workforce and move beyond an entry-level job. Parents and staff compare assessment results with local labor market information to determine the best course of action to find the highest paying, entry-level job.

Community & technical colleges require several assessments to help WorkFirst and low-income parents succeed in training and on the job. A standardized assessment, for example, is required for all adult and family literacy students, while students who need financial aid generally are required to prove they will benefit from training. Each college is unique and may require individual training plans, career ladders or other goal-achieving devices depending on student needs and goals.

The **Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED)** assesses the personal and professional needs of parents in the Community Jobs program to obtain and maintain unsubsidized employment, obtain additional skills and/or treatment, and move towards permanent, unsubsidized work.

WASHINGTON
WorkFirst

- The DSHS Employability Screening determines if the parent is ready for job search.
- The ESD Work Skills Assessment helps individuals make good choices for employment in their labor market.
- Community & Technical College Assessments create a good match between an individual's skill level and employment/training goals.
- Community Jobs & Career Jump Assessments help individuals determine their strengths, manage barriers, gain work experience, and obtain employment.

Program contact:

Roxanne Lowe
(360) 902-9803
roxanne.lowe@ofm.wa.gov

For more information about the
WorkFirst program, visit
www.workfirst.wa.gov

**A Job,
A Better Job,
A Better Life**



